GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3126
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2003
COST OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

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(a) whether the Government have received any representations from social scientists / activities and NGOs toencourage cheaper software / hardware;

(b) if so, the details of the representations received in this regard during 2002-2003; and

(c) the details of any plans to make computers and software affordable?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR)

(a): No, Sir.

(b): Does not arise

(c): Affordability of computers depends on a number of factors including cost of hardware, software, applications, contents etc. These are being addressed by Industry, Industry associations and government on an on-going basis through fiscal measures, expansion of user base thus bringing economies of scale benefits, localization etc. Steps taken by government to promote hardware sector are placed in Annexure. In respect of software, one of the factors to make the cost of legal software affordable is use of free software/ open source software for operating system and/or applications wherever they are available and meet the needs. In this respect, a project on Linux India Initiative is contemplatedby Department of Information Technology, Government of India whichis intended to address, among other things, a set of steps to make software solutions more cost effective for people in the country. Besides, Department of Information Technology has funded localization efforts in a number of agencies including its own societies. These have enabled low cost solutions including those in Linux platform.